

Statement from Mr. Halisi and Ms. Nyelele:

“Today we met with the WRHA, Maples Surgical Centre and the surgeon who performed the surgery on our daughter Ashuza to accept a formal written and verbal apology following the circumstances that took her life. The letter of apology is attached. We are open to receiving the findings from the expert review when they become available.

“We want to thank all our family, friends, the media and the public for their support and condolences over the past few weeks. We appreciate the outpouring of kindness. The passing of our beloved daughter was not easy on the family but we have decided to accept the apology and to move on in our effort to find closure and heal from this tragedy. We kindly ask that you respect and honour our privacy.

“No further public comments or interviews will be made.”

April 18, 2013.

Willy Halisi

Ephemie Nyelele



Winnipeg Regional
Health Authority
Caring for Health

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April 18, 2013

Dear Mr. Halisi and Ms. Nyelele:

Please accept our heartfelt condolences on the death of your beloved daughter Ashuza.

We are very sorry for the events surrounding her death and the circumstances that followed. We are fully aware of how the interactions you had with the 'system' as you struggled to deal with your grief only compounded your sense of loss. For that, we again are truly sorry. We hope you will find some solace from the fact that we are striving to learn from your experiences and will continue to share your story with our staff as an example of the importance of reaching out to families with timely, appropriate and sensitive communications following such a tragedy. It is our hope that will help prevent another family going through a similar experience.

As you know, while the Chief Medical Examiner's investigation was not able to identify exactly what caused the perforation that resulted in the death of your daughter, he was very clear that - absent any other explanation - an accidental surgical complication is the only logical cause. We acknowledge his findings and want you to know how sorry we are that the surgical accident occurred. Please be assured that had any member of the surgical team become aware of anything that would have indicated Ashuza's bowel had been damaged, they would not have discharged her without taking care of the complication.

The internal review is underway and, as recommended by the Chief Medical Examiner, we will be seeking review of the death from an outside expert. We will share the results with you as well as any additional changes we may initiate as a result of these reviews. As you know, work is already underway to update the information provided to patients' parents following this type of day surgery and have instructed staff to make follow-up calls to patients' families within 24 hours of surgery.

If there is anything more that we can do to help you in any way, please contact me. We know that in offering this apology there is nothing that we can say today that can take away the pain that you have already suffered. We sincerely hope that the time you have made to meet with us on several occasions to talk through the questions and concerns you and your extended family and community have about Ashuza's death will bring some measure of comfort.

With deepest sympathy,

Arlene Wilgosh
President and CEO
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

Copy: Dwayne Venter, General Manager Maples Surgical Centre
Dana Erickson, Chief Operating Officer, Children's Hospital, Winnipeg Health Sciences Centre